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Van Buren Man Pleads Guilty and is Sentenced for Violating Endangered Species Act

Bangor, Maine: United States Attorney Paula D. Silsby announced that **Ricky Learnard**, age 41, of Van Buren, pleaded guilty and was sentenced on January 4, 2007, in U.S. District Court in Bangor, to possessing a federally-protected threatened species. Learnard was sentenced to 21 days imprisonment.

Court records reveal that on January 12, 2006, a United States Customs and Border Protection Officer recovered a lynx pelt from the truck of Kevin L. Fortin during an inspection. Investigation conducted by an agent from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a warden from the State of Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife revealed that Ricky Learnard had shot the lynx in Maine in November 2005. The lynx is a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

United States Attorney Silsby praised the investigation conducted by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Maine Warden Service and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

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